



General Assembly

Sixty-fourth session

109th plenary meeting

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Official Records

President. Mr. Ali Abdussalam Treki (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya)

In the absence of the President, Mr. Christian (Ghana), Vice-President, took the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 3.20 p.m.

Agenda item 7 (continued)

Organization of work, adoption of agenda and allocation of items

The Acting President: The General Assembly will now turn to a note by the Secretary-General contained in document A/64/101/Add.2, under sub-item (a) of agenda item 112, concerning the appointment of a member of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions. Members will recall that the General Assembly concluded consideration of sub-item (a) of agenda item 112 at its 75th plenary meeting, on 16 March 2010.

In order for the General Assembly to consider the note of the Secretary-General, it will be necessary first to reopen its consideration of sub-item (a) of agenda item 112.

May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to reopen its consideration of sub-item (a) of agenda item 112?

It was so decided.

The Acting President: Representatives will also recall that at its 2nd plenary meeting, on 18 September 2009, the General Assembly allocated this sub-item to the Fifth Committee. In order for the Assembly to proceed expeditiously on this sub-item, may I take it

that the Assembly agrees to consider this sub-item directly in plenary meeting?

It was so decided.

The Acting President: May I further take it that the Assembly agrees to proceed immediately to the consideration of sub-item (a) of agenda item 112?

It was so decided.

Agenda item 112 (continued)

Appointments to fill vacancies in subsidiary organs and other appointments

(a) Appointment of members of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions

Note by the Secretary-General (A/64/101/Add.2)

The Acting President: In his note, the Secretary-General informs the General Assembly that he has received notification of the resignation of Ms. Misako Kaji of Japan from the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions, effective 1 August 2010. The Assembly will therefore be required to appoint, at its current session, a person to fill the vacancy for the remaining period of the term of office of Ms. Kaji, which expires on 31 December 2010.

The Secretary-General also informs the General Assembly that the Government of Japan has nominated Mr. Akira Sugiyama to fill the vacancy arising from the resignation of Ms. Kaji. The note further states that the

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Secretariat has been informed by the Chair of the Group of Asian States that the candidature of Mr. Sugiyama has been endorsed by the Group.

May I therefore take it that it is the wish of the Assembly to appoint Mr. Akira Sugiyama as a member of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions for a term of office beginning on 1 August 2010 and ending on 31 December 2010?

It was so decided.

The Acting President: May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of sub-item (a) of agenda item 112?

It was so decided.

Agenda item 104 (continued)

Crime prevention and criminal justice

Draft resolution (A/64/L.64)

The Acting President: Members will recall that the General Assembly held the special high-level meeting on Transnational Organized Crime, under agenda item 104, in June 2010.

I should like to consult the Assembly with a view to proceeding immediately to consider the draft resolution contained in document A/64/L.64. In this connection, since the draft resolution has only been circulated today, it would be necessary to waive the relevant provision of rule 78 of the rules of procedure, which reads as follows:

"As a general rule, no proposal shall be discussed or put to the vote at any meeting of the General Assembly unless copies of it have been circulated to all delegations not later than the day preceding the meeting."

Unless I hear any objections, I shall take it that the Assembly agrees with this proposal.

It was so decided.

The Acting President: Before proceeding further, I should like to inform members of the following correction to draft resolution A/64/L.64. In paragraph 4, the reference to "paragraph 36 of the annex of the present resolution" should be changed to read "paragraph 38 of the present resolution".

We shall now proceed to consider draft resolution A/64/L.64, as orally corrected.

In connection with draft resolution A/64/L.64, as orally corrected, I give the floor to the representative of the Secretariat.

Mr. Zhang Saijin (Department for General Assembly and Conference Management): In connection with draft resolution A/64/L.64, entitled "United Nations Global Plan of Action against Trafficking in Persons", I wish to put on record the following statement on financial implications on behalf of the Secretary-General in accordance with rule 153 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly.

By paragraphs 2, 4, 5, 6 and 7 of draft resolution A/64/L.64, the General Assembly would decide to formally launch the Plan of Action in a one-day high-level meeting of the General Assembly and urge Member States, the United Nations and other international, regional and subregional organizations, as well as civil society, including non governmental organizations, the private sector and media, to fully and effectively implement the relevant provisions of the Plan of Action and the activities outlined therein.

The Assembly would decide to establish, in accordance with paragraph 38 of the annex to the draft resolution, the United Nations Voluntary Trust Fund for Victims of Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children; and request the Secretary-General to take all necessary measures for its effective operation, and acknowledge previous and ongoing contributions to other funding sources that support efforts to combat trafficking in persons. It would request the Secretary-General to include a section on the implementation by the United Nations system of the Plan of Action, within already existing reporting obligations to the General Assembly under the item on crime prevention and criminal justice.

The Assembly would decide to appraise in 2013 the progress achieved in the implementation of the Plan of Action and request the Secretary-General to take all necessary measures in that regard. It would request the Secretary-General to present proposals to finance the staffing and programmatic requirements of the Secretariat necessary to strengthen the capacity of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) as described in the Plan of Action through a reallocation of resources in the context of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2012-2013.

By paragraphs 11, 17, 38, 46, 50, 55, 57, 58, 59 and 60 of the annex to draft resolution A/64/L.64, the

General Assembly would strongly urge all responsible United Nations entities to coordinate their efforts to fight trafficking in persons effectively and to protect the human rights of its victims, including by means of the Inter-Agency Coordination Group against Trafficking in Persons and the Global Initiative to Fight Human Trafficking.

It would develop or strengthen processes for the identification of victims, such as those developed, inter alia, by the UNODC and other organizations, including appropriate and non-discriminatory measures that help to identify victims of trafficking in persons among vulnerable populations.

It would establish the United Nations Voluntary Trust Fund for Victims of Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, to provide humanitarian, legal and financial aid to victims of trafficking in persons through established channels of assistance, such as governmental, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations, which shall operate as a subsidiary fund of the United Nations Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Fund, managed by UNODC, and be administered in accordance with the financial regulations and rules of the United Nations and other relevant provisions, with the advice of a board of trustees composed of five persons with relevant experience in the field of trafficking in persons, who shall be appointed with due regard to equitable geographic distribution by the Secretary-General in consultation with Member States and with the Executive Director of UNODC.

It would make use of the available technical assistance provided to strengthen the criminal justice response to trafficking in persons, including by UNODC; and recognize that capacity-building is a very important component in combating trafficking in persons, and encourage and enhance coordination and coherence within the United Nations system.

It would intensify international, regional and subregional cooperation to combat trafficking in persons, as well as technical assistance for countries of origin, destination and transit, aimed at strengthening their ability to prevent all forms of trafficking in persons.

It would encourage UNODC, other United Nations agencies, funds and programmes, as well as international and regional organizations to continue to assist Member States, upon request, to strengthen

policymaking, legislative arrangements, border control and law enforcement cooperation, public awareness campaigns and capacity-building, and to exchange and build upon best practices in assisting victims of trafficking in persons.

It would further encourage United Nations agencies, funds and programmes to continue to improve the coherence and efficiency of technical assistance delivery in the field of trafficking in persons, in accordance with the recommendations of the Open-ended Intergovernmental Working Group of Governmental Experts on Technical Assistance established by the Conference of the Parties to the Convention.

It would urge the Secretary-General to expedite the strengthening of the Inter-Agency Coordination Group against Trafficking in Persons under the coordination of UNODC in order to ensure overall organization and coherence in the United Nations system's efforts to respond to trafficking in persons.

It would request the Secretary-General, as a matter of priority, to strengthen the capacity of UNODC to collect information and report biennially, starting in 2012, on patterns and flows of trafficking in persons at the national, regional and international levels in a balanced, reliable and comprehensive manner, in close cooperation and collaboration with Member States, and share best practices and lessons learned from various initiatives and mechanisms.

In line with paragraph 60 of the annex to the draft resolution, it is envisaged that the activities arising from the operative paragraphs will be implemented effective 1 January 2012. Therefore, the adoption of the draft resolution would not entail any additional requirements for the programme budget for the biennium 2010-2011.

With regard to resource requirements for the biennium 2012-2013, it is the intention of the Secretary-General to address the activities and tasks set out in paragraphs 2, 4, 5, 6 and 7 and paragraphs 11, 17, 38, 46, 50, 55, 57, 58, 59 and 60 of the annex to draft resolution A/64/L.64 in consultation with programme managers to determine the necessary programmatic changes and resource requirements needed for their implementation. Accordingly, should the General Assembly adopt the draft resolution, details on the programmatic changes and resource requirements for the biennium 2012-2013 would be

provided by the Secretary-General to the Assembly at the main part of its sixty-sixth session in the context of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2012-2013.

The Acting President: The Assembly will now take a decision on draft resolution A/64/L.64, entitled "United Nations Global Plan of Action against Trafficking in Persons", as orally corrected.

May I take it that the Assembly decides to adopt draft resolution A/64/L.64, as orally corrected?

Draft resolution A/64/L.64, as orally corrected, was adopted (resolution 64/293).

The Acting President: I shall now read out a statement on behalf of His Excellency Mr. Ali Treki, President of the General Assembly, on the adoption of resolution 64/293, entitled "United Nations Global Plan of Action against Trafficking in Persons".

"I welcome the consensus adoption of the resolution entitled 'United Nations Global Plan of Action against Human Trafficking'.

"I would like to thank the co-facilitators, His Excellency Mr. Moraes Cabral, Permanent Representative of Portugal, and His Excellency Mr. Pedro Monteiro Lima, Permanent Representative of Cape Verde, for facilitating this process. Let me also thank Mr. Antonio Maria Costa and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime for their important support.

"I congratulate all members for their efforts and dedication on this matter, which is also a reaffirmation of their commitment to the promotion and protection of human rights.

"Sixty years ago, the General Assembly adopted the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. It proclaims that all human beings are born free, that no one shall be held in slavery or servitude and that slavery and the slave trade shall be prohibited in all their forms. Yet today millions of people, the majority of them children and women, are victims of a modern form of slavery called human trafficking.

"The collective commitment to fight this menace has led to the adoption of this Plan of Action, which will enforce and strengthen effective and comprehensive measures, including cooperation at all levels, to prevent and combat

trafficking in persons, protect its victims and prosecute its perpetrators.

"All nations must now work together to implement this resolution and the Global Plan of Action to Combat Trafficking in Persons."

Mr. Moraes Cabral (Portugal): As a co-facilitator of this process, allow me to express my profound gratitude to all delegations for their active participation, in a spirit of constructiveness and cooperation, in the consultations on the Global Plan of Action to Combat Trafficking in Persons. The Plan of Action was a common effort in which many delegations from different regions played a very important role. Unfortunately, human trafficking is a growing phenomenon. The international community as a whole has a responsibility to work as closely and efficiently as possible to fight this terrible scourge. There is an international obligation to act. That is the aim of, and reason for, the Plan of Action that we have just adopted.

I would like to pay tribute to Mr. Antonio Maria Costa, who is sitting here next to me and whose mandate as Executive Director of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) will end in a few days. The Plan of Action would also not have been possible without his outstanding support and the hard work of his office in New York. In that context, I would like specifically to mention Ms. Simone Monasebian and Mr. Shashi Kara for all their unremitting work and support.

I am very grateful for Mr. Antonio Maria Costa's commitment to the fight against trafficking in persons and for his vocal support of our work as facilitators. Consequently, I regret that he has been prevented from formally addressing the Assembly formally today for largely artificial and procedural reasons.

Allow me also to say a word of thanks to all those on the teams from the missions of Cape Verde and Portugal who helped to steer our course and made outstanding contributions to our work, often on a daily basis and for many hours each day.

This Global Plan of Action is the result of far-reaching consultations and negotiations and translates the will of the General Assembly. The Plan of Action promotes the universal ratification of the Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and its Trafficking Protocol. It also reinforces the

implementation of existing instruments and helps Member States to strengthen their national and regional commitments to prevent and combat trafficking in persons. It calls for better coordination among international organizations, States and other stakeholders, as well as for raising awareness of trafficking in persons, especially on the part of civil society.

The structure of the Plan closely follows the structure and main pillars of the Palermo Protocol, specifically to prevent and combat trafficking, to protect and assist victims and to promote cooperation and coordination. In each section of the Plan, we have managed to identify specific commitments to address trafficking in persons that are consistent with previously agreed legal instruments. I would reiterate that the Plan does not duplicate, replace or divert attention from existing legal instruments, and surely does not undermine the relevance and importance of legally binding international treaties. On the contrary, I believe that it will reinforce such documents and promote their universal ratification and effective implementation. Several paragraphs in each section of this document contain clear references to those crucial legal instruments and to the concrete actions foreseen by them to fight trafficking in persons.

But beyond the law enforcement perspective, the Plan of Action also includes other dimensions that are central to our work here in the General Assembly. In our view, these dimensions certainly constitute an added value to the efforts of the international community against trafficking in persons. It introduces a human rights perspective as well as a social development perspective, both of which are crucial in our efforts in the fight against trafficking.

Following that logic, the Plan of Action contains several references to human rights instruments and bodies and to the work of special rapporteurs, which is highlighted throughout the text. The Plan also contains a victim-oriented approach, because victim protection should be another central element of our anti-trafficking efforts at the national, regional and international levels. In that regard, the Plan of Action has a very concrete outcome for victims. It establishes a trust fund for victims of trafficking in persons.

The second concrete outcome that I would underline is the global report on trafficking patterns and flows, best practices and lessons learned from

regional initiatives and mechanisms that will be produced by UNODC starting in 2012. That global report, like the one produced in 2009 with data and information on trafficking in persons, will certainly help us to calibrate our action.

Another element that we especially value is the call for better coordination of efforts and for the mainstreaming of the issue of trafficking in persons into policies and programmes addressing, within the United Nations system, economic development, human rights, the rule of law, good governance, natural disaster issues and post-conflict reconstruction.

Last but not least, the Plan encourages and underlines the importance of regional efforts and the exchange of good practices. Much has been done by numerous Member States, both nationally and in regional frameworks. Those experiences and the sharing of best practices will certainly be very valuable for many other Member States.

Let me conclude by saying that being a facilitator of this process was sometimes very difficult but also very personally rewarding, especially when we managed to bridge the gaps between delegations and to create common and cross-regional ground on such an important issue.

Mr. Lima (Cape Verde) (*spoke in French*): Today is a great day for the innumerable victims of trafficking in persons and for the United Nations. That is so thanks to the adoption by consensus of the Global Plan of Action to Combat Trafficking in Persons, which is not only a fundamental text on the legal level that we present to the world, but more importantly is a reference document and a document of hope for all victims and persons who are threatened or targeted by the abominable practice that makes human beings a unit of consumption and submissive spoils of war who are at the mercy of the basest instincts and the most heinous kind of bargaining.

With the Plan of Action, we give fresh hope to all those throughout the world who are being hurt by a practice that, far from disappearing from one era to another, in times of peace or of war re-emerges as a hydra to extend its ravages into every region of the world, sparing no man, woman or child. When I think of the children — and especially children — condemned to labour that they are too weak for and which ruins their health to slake the thirst for easy profit for traffickers, or who are used for sexual ends

by depraved persons or pedophiles — when I think of these young victims, I am grateful that I have contributed, as a co-facilitator, to originating this Plan of Action, which I am sure will make its mark in the annals of the United Nations.

But in order to do that we will need even more commitment from all stakeholders — States, Governments, interested organizations at all levels, governmental and non-governmental alike, private organizations, civil society groups and people of goodwill throughout the world. The danger is not only real; it is increasingly palpable everywhere. Its impact on the lives of communities and individuals is unquestionable, and the consequences for our societies are incalculable.

It is estimated that 4 million women and girls are bought and sold into forced marriages, prostitution or slavery throughout the world, and around 1 million children enter the sex trade every year. Some child exploitation practices are so customary that they go unnoticed, attracting only fleeting disapproval. That system is perpetuated and silence is generalized, while everyone in good faith calls for condemnation of the most visible practices of a system in which profit, poverty and turpitude are intertwined and the lives of children, who die in silence from mistreatment, constitute but a long litany of suffering.

In his courageous and revealing report of February 2009, Mr. Antonio Maria Costa, Executive Director of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), explained that the report

“increases our partial understanding of the forces at play in modern slave markets. Yet internationally standardized data are still not available, a limitation that hampers the sharing of information between and among states, and with the UNODC. Aggregated statistics cannot be put together, neither at geographic nor thematic levels.

“As a consequence, we still lack a global understanding of the subject, and of how its components interact to make the whole.

“We should be, but we are not, able to segment today’s slave markets into their components (demand, supply, trafficking, and related prices). We must, but cannot, catalogue (for lack of data) the different types of slavery: exploitation

through child-begging in Europe is different from what goes on in a brothel, or on a street corner in Australia. Preventive measures must also be adapted to take into account that an Asian father sells his under-age daughter under circumstances different from what forces an African teenager into a rag-tag army of killers, or what pushes an illegal immigrant into a sweat shop in the Americas. Measures to rescue victims and punish criminals must vary accordingly.” (*Global Report on Trafficking in Persons, Executive Summary*)

I would like to pay glowing tribute to Mr. Antonio Maria Costa for his unfailing self-sacrifice to a cause that he has always and everywhere defended. I also wish to express the warmest thanks of my Government for his well-deserving, tireless and inspired actions at the head of UNODC and for the contributions of his office in New York, without which it would have been difficult for us to achieve this result. For all their efforts, I would also like to thank Ms. Monasebian and Mr. Shashi Kara.

The work of UNODC should inspire us in the effort to condemn trafficking and to highlight the turpitude of civilized societies. That should be the purpose of the Plan of Action. Contributing towards improving understanding of this heinous form of trafficking will make it possible for States to be more active and effective in their efforts against traffickers by virtue of being better informed, equipped and determined to act to prevent trafficking, protect victims and prosecute traffickers.

The Plan of Action should also make it possible to expand cooperation between Member States and regional and subregional organizations, while increasing the efficiency of the efforts of all parties involved. Trafficking in persons is a global phenomenon. As such, stakeholders should devote all the resources available in order to eradicate it.

I should also like to commend our experts’ ability to listen and to undertake dialogue. They have done genuinely impressive work to arrive at a consensus text. What was unclear became acceptable to everyone. What was rejected was ultimately taken into account. Often, misunderstanding and mistrust were set aside so that the goodwill of all could prevail. Understanding prevailed in order to make resolute progress on behalf of victims and of the future. We should now move beyond words and transform today’s resolution and

Plan of Action into an assurance of survival for the victims of trafficking, a commitment against impunity for all traffickers and a guarantee of a normal and, if possible, happy life for all of the children on Earth, who are our children.

Ms. Gendi (Egypt): On behalf of Egypt, in its capacity as Chair of the African Group, I have the pleasure to deliver this statement on behalf of the 53 members of the Group of African States of the United Nations following the adoption of the resolution entitled "United Nations Global Plan of Action against Trafficking in Persons", contained in document A/64/L.64, dated 29 July 2010.

The African Group takes pride today in adopting the Global Plan of Action against Trafficking in Persons, which the Group considers as a milestone on the road to ending victimization, prosecuting perpetrators, preventing and protecting all people from falling into the sinful hands of organized crime and compensating victims and supporting national efforts and relevant organizations in their work to that end.

We take pride in the fact that, for the first time in history, we have a universally approved mechanism for coordinating all our efforts nationally, regionally and internationally. The Global Plan of Action against Trafficking will act not only as a coordinating mechanism for Member States, but also as a strategic framework for the international community to work coherently towards preventing and fighting trafficking in persons.

One of its main goals is to accelerate progress in the implementation of existing international instruments — including the most important among them, namely, the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, which supplements the Palermo Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, which was adopted in 2000 — as well as to fill all the gaps existing among all instruments, plans and strategies, whether at the national, regional or international levels, in a unified, coherent, comprehensive and coordinated manner that does not duplicate work but, rather, consolidates and complements existing efforts to fight national and international trafficking in persons.

The Global Plan of Action that we have adopted today has been born strong. Member States have decided to come together, with the help of international community, to establish the new United Nations

Voluntary Trust Fund for Victims of Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children. We hope that it will become operational as soon as possible, for the benefit of victims of trafficking.

The Global Plan of Action is not an exclusive instrument of Member States and the United Nations system. It belongs to all and should be fully and effectively implemented by all players in the area of trafficking in persons, even those who were not very visible on the global scene a decade ago. International organizations, civil society and the private sector have a great role to play in that regard. The Global Plan of Action can only harmonize and coordinate the roles of all those important players. It can set out a number of forward-looking actions that are essential to combating human trafficking — with associated and clearly defined targets and achievement indicators that can allow us as Member States and the international community to periodically review, assess and appraise progress towards agreed policy goals and to direct national policy towards high-impact response measures.

The new United Nations Global Plan of Action comprehensively takes into consideration the different capabilities and needs of developing and developed States, whether they are supply, transit or destination countries. In detailing the efforts to be undertaken by Member States, it takes into consideration the vital importance of international cooperation, technical assistance and capacity building. The United Nations Global Plan of Action has also identified the role of different players in raising awareness, gathering information and providing proper education that will help the general public to assist in efforts to combat trafficking in persons at all levels.

This has been a long road filled with obstacles and challenges, but one that has led to enormous achievements. That was the road that African leaders walked with determination from Sharm el-Sheikh, where they adopted a decision, during the African summit held in June and July 2008, to work together towards the adoption of a United Nations Global Plan of Action against Trafficking in Persons. A year later, also at Sharm el-Sheikh, the leaders of the Non-Aligned Movement also supported that effort. That road has led to New York, where we are today witnessing a milestone in the fight against trafficking in persons, namely, the adoption in the General Assembly of the

United Nations Global Plan of Action against Trafficking in Persons.

Finally, we owe a debt of thanks to you personally, Mr. Vice-President, and to the President of the Assembly and his representatives for the leadership in making the fight against trafficking in persons one of the presidency's priority issues. We are also grateful to the two facilitators of the Global Plan of Action — Ambassador Antonio Pedro Monteiro Lima, Permanent Representative of Cape Verde, and Ambassador José Filipe Moraes Cabral, Permanent Representative of Portugal — and to their very active teams for the endless hours they dedicated to making our dream come true and to pushing us to meet our responsibilities in finalizing the excellent document before us.

We also owe a debt of thanks to the Secretary-General and the Secretariat, particularly the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), for the amazing work they are continuously doing to assist Member States in their fight against trafficking and for the support to the whole process of adopting a Global Plan of Action by consensus.

We cannot forget the visionary work of Mr. Antonio Maria Costa, head of UNODC, who will be leaving us shortly, and his great achievements in the fight against trafficking in persons. The African Group also welcomes the appointment of the new head of UNODC. We will be ready to work with him in our common fight against organized crime, particularly trafficking in persons.

Ms. De Geest (Belgium): Thank you, Mr. Vice-President, for giving me the floor to speak on behalf of the European Union (EU). The European Union would like to thank the co-facilitators for presenting the text of the Global Plan of Action. The EU acknowledges the co-facilitators' hard and careful work on this issue over the past months, and is very appreciative of all their efforts.

Human trafficking is a topic that is a major political priority for the EU. The EU remains strongly committed to the fight against this hideous crime, which is an affront to human dignity and which constitutes a gross violation of the human rights of victims, particularly of women and children.

The EU is strongly convinced that, in this fight, the primacy of the existing legal instruments, namely,

the Convention Against Transnational Organized Crime and the protocols thereto, in particular the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, is beyond doubt, as they form the pillars for international cooperation in this area.

The fear of the EU during this process was that the adoption of this non-binding document could serve as a disincentive for Member States to ratify and implement the existing instruments, which are legally binding. It is clear that this Plan of Action cannot replace the Convention and the Trafficking Protocol. This is the standing position of the EU.

The EU therefore urges Member States that have not yet done so to ratify or accede to those instruments and to implement them fully and effectively. Unfortunately, this call could not be expressed as strongly as we had wished. The EU negotiated in good faith, and with a constructive and principled approach, throughout the consultation process. Today, we joined the consensus on the Plan of Action.

However, we want to emphasize once more that the implementation of this Plan should not lead, now or in the future, to a parallel process that undermines the process currently ongoing in Vienna. The EU insists that any risk of duplicative reporting obligations or, all the more so, of double legal standards should be very carefully avoided. To that end, we reaffirm and fully support the primary institutional and legal role played by the Conference of the Parties to the Convention. Other partners found it difficult to understand and accommodate these fundamental concerns, which we regret.

The EU sees the merit of the global report on trafficking in persons, patterns and flows. At the same time, the EU understands that resources for this report should be found through re-allocation.

The EU considers that the human rights dimension is crucial in the fight against trafficking. Given its priority, the EU welcomes references in the text to the rights of victims and victim assistance and protection, including the provision of a wide range of services for victims. The EU thinks that civil society plays a crucial role in providing services to victims, and therefore appreciates that this is recognized in the text.

The EU also welcomes the support for the role and mandates of the relevant Special Rapporteurs. The EU also recognizes the important role and the work done by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime in the field of human trafficking.

In conclusion, the EU hopes that all Member States will renew their efforts to prevent and combat human trafficking and that they will tackle it forcefully wherever it occurs.

Mr. Barton (United States of America): Our thanks go to the Ambassadors of Cape Verde and Portugal and to the many negotiators who were so helpful in this process. Special thanks go to Executive Director Costa as well for his fine work over the years.

The United States is deeply committed to combating trafficking in persons. With the adoption of the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, in 2000, the international community defined trafficking in persons for the first time at the international level and agreed to prevent and combat it, as well as to protect and assist its victims. In doing so, it gave a new name to an old crime. Trafficking in persons has since been used as an umbrella term for all activities involved in obtaining or holding someone in compelled service — whether sex trafficking, involuntary servitude, slavery, debt bondage or forced labour.

The United States is proud to join with the 116 countries that enacted legislation prohibiting all forms of trafficking and is eager to work collaboratively to address the many systemic factors — from supply-chain sourcing and Government procurement to immigration and shelter policies — that may contribute to trafficking in persons. As we look to new ways to engage and tackle this crime, we maintain the primacy of the Protocol and its mandate to bring traffickers to justice while protecting victims.

The United States maintains its position that the focus of international anti-trafficking in persons efforts should be on the universal ratification and implementation of the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and its supplementary Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, not on the establishment of a new mechanism in New York. The Trafficking Protocol serves as the cornerstone for effective action in ending human

trafficking. Ultimately, the political will of Governments is vitally important in the fight against trafficking in persons.

Despite our concerns as to the necessity of the Global Plan of Action, we have collaborated in good faith to ensure that this document is as strong as possible, while not creating any parallel New York process and not overriding the Palermo treaties or the mandate of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime in Vienna. We think that the final text of the document reflects this for the most part.

We appreciate the efforts of the facilitators and the main supporters of the Global Plan of Action in addressing our concerns. With regard to paragraph 6 of the resolution, it is the view of the United States that this should be limited to an item on the agenda of the General Assembly, under which Member States would self-report on their efforts to implement the Global Plan of Action. The United States will not object to the current language of paragraph 6. However, we will not support efforts in the future to turn the Global Plan of Action, or any mechanism that may be established to review its implementation, into a formal ongoing mechanism in New York that will divert resources from technical assistance and other activities related to the Palermo Protocol.

Human trafficking is a threat to national security, public health and democracy. Real action is needed on the ground to combat trafficking, and it is our hope that the resolution and the annexed Global Plan of Action will lead to universal ratification and implementation of the Protocol.

In view of the critical importance of ending human trafficking, we were pleased to join consensus on this resolution and the annexed Global Plan of Action.

Mr. Escalona Ojeda (the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela) (*spoke in Spanish*): At the outset, the delegation of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela wishes to express its gratitude to the delegations of Portugal and Cape Verde for their tireless efforts and the professionalism, transparency and diplomatic skill they exhibited in their roles as facilitators throughout the process of negotiating the Global Plan of Action against Trafficking in Persons.

The Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela believes that trafficking in persons is a grave violation of human rights and a transgression of human dignity. It is our firm conviction that if we are to effectively prevent, control and fight this terrible scourge, we must, among other things, strengthen our States' commitments to broadening and improving the programmes and initiatives which aim at fighting and reducing poverty, inequity and social exclusion, which are the root causes of the increased vulnerability of women, boys and girls, in particular, who fall victim to criminal traffickers, who often belong to organized criminal groups operating nationally and transnationally.

My country has stressed the importance of fighting poverty and social injustice in a variety of international fora, and we have created the most extensive national network of social programmes ever seen in our history, with the aim of meeting the social needs of all our citizens, especially the poor and most vulnerable. In our country, we have strong and wide-ranging legislation and national action plans to combat trafficking. Remaining faithful to the Bolivarian ideal, we are working towards the realization of social justice.

Within this conceptual framework, Venezuelan legislation — such as the Organic Law on the Right of Women to a Life Free from Violence — strictly prohibits different forms of trafficking in persons. Among the efforts of the Bolivarian Government to strengthen the national legal framework in this area, the Ministry of People's Power for Interior and Justice is currently developing a national action plan to prevent, suppress and punish the crime of trafficking in persons, prostitution and pornography. National and international bodies, including UNICEF, are involved in this effort.

Efforts to fight this scourge must be made on a global scale. Broad-based international cooperation at all levels is critical to effectively counteracting the threats posed by trafficking in persons and other modern-day forms of slavery. In this context, we believe firmly that the struggle against this crime is a joint responsibility that is shared by countries of origin, transit and destination. However, we believe that the regions representing the principle markets for trafficked persons have the primary responsibility for finding a solution, since there would be no supply without demand. Furthermore, those who organize the demand are, in general, linked through transnational

networks to those who organize the supply, while the victims are usually the poor of the world, from both the South and the North.

The role of multilateralism, and in particular the role of the United Nations, must therefore be strengthened in the monitoring and evaluation of trafficking in persons, which must always be based on the statistics and information provided by Member States. As has already been pointed out, it is difficult to obtain statistics in this area, given the nature of these criminal acts. My delegation therefore takes this opportunity to reiterate its firm rejection of the selective, unilateral evaluations carried out by certain countries, motivated by purely political ends.

In conclusion, the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela supports the adoption and implementation of the Global Plan of Action to Combat Trafficking in Persons, which will enable us to ensure the full and effective application of all existing legal instruments in this area, as well as to promote coordination and cooperation among Member States, mechanisms and bodies established under the treaties endorsed by States and other legal instruments established in the framework of the United Nations system.

Mr. Benítez Versón (Cuba) (*spoke in Spanish*): Cuba welcomes the adoption by the General Assembly of the United Nations Global Plan of Action to Combat Trafficking in Persons. This instrument is necessary, especially given the increase in trafficking in persons around the world.

We believe that strengthening international cooperation is of vital importance to fighting this scourge, and the Plan of Action will help towards that end, based on full respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of States. Cuba believes that the consultative process has yielded a balanced Plan of Action, which includes provisions for concrete action and an important political call to action by the General Assembly in the fight against trafficking in persons.

We would have preferred the Plan to include explicit references to the need to take joint action, without the imposition of unilateral evaluations or requirements on States, which Cuba strongly rejects. Nonetheless, it is clear that any unilateral, selective and politically motivated evaluation with respect to trafficking in persons would go entirely against the Global Plan of Action that we have adopted today. We therefore hope that States that continue such

unacceptable practices will discontinue them immediately.

We welcome the provisions of the Plan of Action pertaining to the drafting of balanced, reliable and comprehensive reports on trafficking in persons at the national, regional and international levels. Such reports should strengthen multilateralism as the sole way of combating all types of transnational crime.

In the case of Cuba — which is not categorized as a country of origin, transit or destination of this scourge — the legislation and measures that we have adopted in this area make us one of the countries with the most advanced norms and mechanisms to prevent and combat trafficking in persons.

We are especially grateful to the facilitators of this process — Ambassadors Antonio Pedro Monteiro Lima of Cape Verde and José Filipe Moraes Cabral of Portugal — for their efforts to strike a balance among all the parties.

I should like to conclude by reiterating Cuba's unwavering commitment to continue to resolutely combat trafficking in persons in all its aspects and to strengthen our concrete cooperation links with the international community and the United Nations in our joint efforts to prevent and eradicate trafficking in persons throughout the world.

Ms. Alkhalifa (Bahrain) (*spoke in Arabic*): The delegation of Bahrain welcomes the consensus adoption of the United Nations Global Plan of Action against Trafficking in Persons.

On behalf of my country, I am pleased to express our sincere gratitude to the facilitators, the Permanent Representatives of Cape Verde and Portugal, to whom the President assigned the difficult task of finding common ground among all parties concerned in reaching consensus agreement on the Plan in spite of all the complexities and points of view on this issue. My delegation believes that the co-facilitators succeeded in that very difficult undertaking, for which we are particularly grateful. We also thank all delegations that participated so patiently in the negotiations in a genuine desire to agree on the fundamental principles, which led them to accept certain compromises.

The Kingdom of Bahrain made significant efforts to be part of this process, in line with our country's political orientation and as part of a reform process that

encompasses all areas of life, especially human rights, labour laws and the rights of women. We have done so based on our belief that, regardless of the form it takes, trafficking in persons should be addressed by the entire international community under the leadership of the United Nations and with a common voice and purpose.

Member States now have the responsibility to implement the Plan of Action in close cooperation in order to achieve the desired results. The Kingdom of Bahrain will attach the greatest priority and attention to the Plan and make it part of our legislation.

Mr. Ahmed (Bangladesh): My delegation would like to thank the two facilitators for the manner in which they guided the negotiations that culminated in today's consensus adoption of the Global Plan of Action against Trafficking in Persons.

As a member of the informal Group of Friends United against Human Trafficking, we express our satisfaction with the entire exercise. We also wish to thank all delegations, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime and others that took an active part in the long negotiations over the past few months. Now that we have a Global Plan of Action, the onus is on us, the Member States, to implement it.

As the issue of trafficking in persons is mostly transboundary in nature, we hope that all Member States will complement each other in carrying out the difficult task of curbing and eradicating this trade.

Mr. Cabactulan (Philippines): Discussions on the subject of the Global Plan of Action against Trafficking in Persons have taken place for many years. They could very well have gone on for many years, but President Treki's determination to conclude the Plan of Action under his watch took the debate to another level. It is for that reason that my delegation would like to pay special tribute to him for his courage and vision in seeing to it that the sixty-fourth session achieved very concrete and meaningful results, such as the Global Plan of Action.

In the same vein, my delegation highly commends the facilitators — His Excellency Mr. José Filipe Moraes Cabral of Portugal and His Excellency Mr. Antonio Pedro Monteiro Lima of Cape Verde — as well as their staff, who displayed competence, transparency, judiciousness and, may I say, extreme patience during the consultations. Let me also thank Mr. Antonio Maria Costa and the United Nations

Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) for their very important role in the formulation of the Plan.

Addressing today's slavery is important to us all. UNODC and the many United Nations supporting agencies in the areas of economics, crime and human rights with the expertise in the implementation of existing instruments have told us that, as the international community, we are wanting. We have been reminded that there are many unaccounted for, unseen and unattended victims, and that there will be many more. We have also been told that very prosperous and resourceful traffickers thrive due to the gaps in the international community's coordination.

It is for those reasons that the Global Plan of Action against Trafficking in Persons is of the utmost relevance and importance. We should henceforth take every opportunity to report, assist, inform and share. We should publicly and loudly demonstrate that, acting as one, the international community intends to bring to light the many faces of this hidden crime and the victims it produces.

Let me conclude by expressing my delegation's great pleasure for the consensus adoption of resolution 64/293.

Mr. Torres (Colombia) (*spoke in Spanish*): First of all, allow me to acknowledge the dedicated and patient efforts of the Permanent Representatives of Cape Verde and Portugal as facilitators of this process.

My country attaches special priority to crucial national and international efforts to prevent and combat the pernicious trafficking in persons, protect and help its victims, and prosecute and bring to justice the perpetrators of this crime. In that regard, Colombia has developed a significant legal framework and comprehensive public policies that are being implemented in a coordinated way by various State institutions. My country also participates in initiatives to provide and generate ever-increasing international cooperation to combat trafficking in persons.

Colombia would like to take this opportunity to make some comments on the adoption of resolution 64/293 and its annex on the United Nations Global Plan of Action to Combat Trafficking in Persons.

First, my delegation would like to reiterate that, for Colombia, the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons,

Especially Women and Children, form the basic pillar of the international community's fight against organized crime and the trafficking persons.

The Palermo Convention and its Protocol on trafficking in persons establish a concrete and effective legal framework to prevent, investigate and punish all manifestations of organized crime, including trafficking in persons, and to strengthen international cooperation in that regard and provide proper protection for the victims. The effective implementation of these instruments has been and continues to be indispensable in the efficient, consistent and coordinated fight against trafficking in persons in the national and international contexts. Full support and guarantees for compliance with the mandates and work of Conference of the Parties are also indispensable to effectively improving the ability of States to fight transnational organized crime and to promote and monitor the enforcement of the Palermo Convention and its Protocols.

Secondly, my delegation wishes to stress that the consideration of the United Nations Global Plan of Action against Trafficking in Persons was undertaken with the purpose, set forth in resolution 63/194, of ensuring the full and effective implementation of the Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children. In this sense, the main contribution of the Plan of Action is the renewed commitment of Member States to promoting the universal ratification of the Palermo Convention and its trafficking Protocol, and to effectively strengthening and applying these instruments, the role of which was explicitly recognized in the resolution adopted today.

Colombia recognizes the eminently political essence of the Plan of Action. We hope that its spirit and aspirations will contribute to strengthening coordination among the organs of the United Nations system having jurisdiction in the fight against trafficking in persons. We trust that the implementation of the resolution will duly reflect the political will expressed by Member States in the consultations to ensure that the Plan of Action offers complementary support to international efforts within the framework of the Palermo Convention and its trafficking Protocol, including the preservation of and due respect for the work of and the mandate established for the Conference of Parties.

Accordingly, it is essential to ensure that at no time shall the Plan generate the creation of bodies or review or follow-up mechanisms parallel to those that have already been identified and defined by the Conference of the Parties to the Palermo Convention, of which the fifth session will take place in October.

My country recognizes that the efforts of any one State are not enough to prevent trafficking in persons. Action to counter and eradicate this crime calls for firm political commitment, resolute international political cooperation and mutual criminal justice assistance. The protection of victims requires national actions to be strengthened with the support of the international community. We hope that the United Nations, in its work against trafficking in persons, will continue to focus its efforts and resources on supporting Member States in the full implementation of the Palermo Convention and the Protocol on trafficking in persons, and to support those States that have not yet ratified these instruments in adapting their legal frameworks and institutional capacities to join the Convention and the Protocol. The universalization of these binding legal instruments as the indispensable framework for effective international cooperation based on trust, reciprocity and effective cooperation should be our common goal and a priority for all.

Mr. Mohamed (Maldives), Vice-President, took the Chair.

To conclude, allow me to acknowledge the outstanding work of Mr. Antonio Maria Costa, Executive Director of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. He is here today, and I wish to thank him on behalf of my Government for his cooperation with and support to Colombia throughout the years in which he has held that honourable post.

Mr. Andrade (Brazil): We welcome the adoption by consensus of the Global Plan of Action against Trafficking in Persons, which is a valuable contribution to the efforts of the international community to fight such a heinous crime. We would like to thank all delegations involved in the discussions for their cooperative spirit, which led to a successful outcome of the negotiations. We would especially like to express our gratitude for the facilitators of this process, the Permanent Representatives of Cape Verde and Portugal, and their staff, who very ably led us through such a complex and delicate discussion and contributed decisively to the successful outcome.

Mrs. Rubiales de Chamorro (Nicaragua) (*spoke in Spanish*): The millions of victims of trafficking in persons, that modern form of slavery, today have received fresh hope to counter their suffering. The adoption of the Global Plan of Action against Trafficking in Persons is an historic milestone not only for our Organization, but above all for the lives of the human beings who have fallen prey to the greed and avarice of those who profit from trafficking in human beings.

The need to adopt the Global Plan of Action against Trafficking in Persons is of long date. Under the Nicaraguan presidency of the General Assembly at its sixty-third session, under the leadership of Father Miguel d'Escoto Brockmann, we began to formally discuss the possibility of adopting such a plan of action. At that time, the Plan seemed very controversial and difficult to agree because many delegations did not see the need for a global plan of action. However, a ever-growing group of friendly countries headed by Belarus decided to continue to draw the attention of the international community to the urgent need for the Plan. We thank the President of the General Assembly at its sixty-fourth session for his support and for returning to it with great strength.

Today, the Global Plan of Action has become a reality thanks to the determination of Member States. I wish to especially mention the experts who worked extremely hard to make the Plan a reality. I also wish to thank the Executive Director of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, Mr. Antonio Maria Costa, and his team, especially Ms. Simone Monasebian. I also wish to acknowledge the leadership and dedication of the facilitators, the representatives of Cape Verde and Portugal, Mr. Antonio Pedro Monteiro Lima and Mr. José Felipe Moraes Cabral. We thank them for their excellent work.

The leadership and good sense of our facilitators made the process transparent that took most of the concerns of Member States into account. The role played by the facilitators in this achievement demonstrated that any issue before the United Nations can be discussed in accordance with the principles of equality and mutual respect between States. No matter how large or small the countries we represent may be, it is always possible to reach consensus based on justice and good faith. This achievement is also a clear demonstration that multilateralism does indeed work.

Mr. Christian (Ghana), Vice-President, returned to the Chair.

The result is a balanced document that covers all aspects of the issue. It may not reflect our every aspiration — in our case, for example, we should have liked to further stress the need to eliminate demand as a main cause of trafficking in persons for sexual exploitation — but we are very pleased indeed because we now have an international instrument that provides a broad, strategic framework and will contribute to greater coordination of the collective efforts of States Members, the United Nations system and non-governmental organizations.

Far from contradicting or overlapping with existing legal instruments, the Plan will contribute to facilitating the implementation of international and regional instruments and mechanisms, as well as better cooperation and collaboration among members of the international community that will contribute to preventing this crime; protecting and assisting victims of trafficking, with a focus on human rights, especially for women and children; and to prosecuting perpetrators.

The commitment of the delegation of Nicaragua to the approval of the Plan is a reflection of the commitment of our Government of National Reconciliation and Unity to eradicating this evil worldwide, and especially within our region of Central America.

Mr. Troya (Ecuador) (*spoke in Spanish*): The delegation of Ecuador believes that the adoption of the United Nations Global Plan of Action to Combat Trafficking in Persons is valuable and timely. The document we have adopted will give hope to many people who have fallen victims to the detestable crime of trafficking in persons. We are sure that the Plan of Action does not counter or weaken such international instruments as the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children. On the contrary, it reinforces and complements those international instruments.

Every year, millions of people fall victim to one of the largest illicit businesses on Earth. Human trafficking fills the pockets of international mafias that profit from the suffering of those who have had to leave their countries for many reasons. My delegation

is aware that the problem of uncontrolled migration of human beings cannot be resolved through protocols, conventions or other instruments of this nature. Uncontrolled migration can be countered only when countries of origin offer their own citizens decent living conditions and opportunities that make it unnecessary to leave one's motherland.

The road we have had to take to reach this census has been long and difficult. Therefore, we must recognize and applaud the valuable work of the facilitators, the Ambassadors of Portugal and Cape Verde, and the entire Working Group on Trafficking in Persons, to whom we owe, to a large degree, the success of our work.

My delegation wishes to express our deep satisfaction with the agreement reached and reiterate our firm commitment to working to implement the Plan of Action.

Mrs. Kolontai (Belarus) (*spoke in Russian*): Belarus welcomes the General Assembly's successful consensus adoption of such a meaningful and long-awaited instrument as the United Nations Global Plan of Action to Combat Trafficking in Persons. This is an important and symbolic milestone in the development of the international process, in which Belarus became a participant five years ago.

The Plan of Action is a compelling manifestation of the positive, far-reaching changes that Belarus actively sought when it advanced in the United Nations the idea of the need for systemic efforts to improve the coordination and harmonization of multilateral actions against trafficking in persons. We welcome the efforts of the President of the General Assembly, Mr. Ali Treki, and the facilitators of the negotiation process on the Global Plan, the Permanent Representatives of Portugal and Cape Verde to the United Nations, Mr. José Filipe Moraes Cabral and Mr. Antonio Pedro Monteiro Lima, in organizing the negotiation process and ensuring its effectiveness.

We also welcome the efforts of the parties aimed at achieving consensus on resolution 64/293, introduced at today's meeting of the General Assembly. We express particular gratitude to Mr. Antonio Maria Costa who, as the Executive Director of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, was an active advocate of the Global Plan of Action from the outset. He undertook tireless efforts to advance the idea of the need for the Plan and supported the establishment of

the Group of Friends against human trafficking. We thank the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime in New York and Ms. Simone Monasebian personally for their invaluable assistance to States during the negotiation process on the Global Plan.

We have come a long way to the point we have reached today, from the initial resolutions laying out the possible coordinated joint actions to the frank and wide-ranging discussions of this problem at the thematic debates in the General Assembly, and from the establishment of the informal Group of Friends that came together to fight against human trafficking to the collective drafting and consensus adoption of the Global Plan of Action to Combat Trafficking in Persons.

We recognize that the Plan is not a cure-all solution to the scourge of trafficking in persons. We understand that it is not ideal. As a compromise document, the Plan cannot reflect the varying and specific natures of the approaches of individual States or groups in addressing the complex problem of eradicating trafficking in persons, but it does reflect the most important thing — the resolve of Member States to see this complex matter through to the end.

We are certain that the Plan can mobilize and harmonize the efforts of the entire international community to prevent and suppress human trafficking and will guide these efforts within a coordinated, balanced and comprehensive framework. We believe that the Global Plan will contribute to further broadening the list of parties to the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and its Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, and that it can help to universalize these important legal instruments. In adopting the Global Plan of Action today, the General Assembly has sent to the international community a clear, strong signal that

the United Nations has the will and ability to put an end to the modern form of slavery that is trafficking in persons, and to do so by acting now and together.

In Belarus, we do not believe that this is an idealistic approach. By acting together, we can prove that this is not the case.

Ms. Khvan (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): The delegation of the Russian Federation was pleased to join the consensus on resolution 64/293 on the United Nations Global Plan of Action to Combat Trafficking in Persons. Above all, we would like to express our gratitude to the facilitators of the negotiation process, the Permanent Representatives of Portugal and Cape Verde. We are certain that today's adoption was made possible by their persistence and their creativity in seeking balanced language reflecting the interests of all interested States.

Furthermore, we welcome the constructive and responsible approach of all parties to the negotiating process. Clearly, without the political will to seek compromise, the drafting of the Global Plan of Action would hardly have been made possible. It is heartening that, despite the sometimes differing understandings and assessments of the problem, we were still able to pool our efforts against the threat of trafficking in persons. We believe that only a comprehensive and holistic approach will allow us to achieve tangible results against this scourge.

In conclusion, we express the hope that the Global Plan adopted today will become an effective road map for the entire international community to counter trafficking in persons.

The Acting President: The Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 104.

The meeting rose at 4.50 p.m.